

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUES
July 22, 2010

The meeting was called to order by Ernie Martinez, Chairman at 9:40 am. Introductions were done. Agenda was read and the minutes were read but not adopted because of a lack of quorum. Minutes for the June 22, 2010 meeting were read. Ms. Hyams said that there was a correction: the word Shelter at the end of the minutes needed to be changed to Center. She explained the difference and will go back to listen to the tape. The minutes were approved as corrected when a quorum was achieved.

Attendance: J. Martinez, J. Miller, J. David, S. Hix, A. Rigerman, S. Kohlenberg, R. Fulton

Discussion on the Minutes: There were general questions from the reading of the minutes concerning Ms. Gonzalez's presentation. A question was asked about food. Ms. Hyams said that if you go to OEM's website it will suggest that people should bring snacks or food if they have a special diet or are diabetic. There was another question concerning people in need but not registered on the special needs register. Ms. Hyams said that the County will always try to accommodate someone but they will first work through the registered list. She said the County encourages people who feel they have special needs to register. Mr. Martinez asked everyone to read the minutes before a meeting and if you are unable to access the minutes please call the ADA office before the meeting and the minutes will be read to you.

Access Committee: Mr. Miller gave his report. He reported that the minutes were sent out to CODI members by email. The committee talked about the issues that would go on the agenda for the July meeting. Mr. Edwards had two issues concerning elections, Ms. Hyams asked for time on the agenda to speak about office matters, and Mr. Martinez asked for time to speak about committees. It came up that there was never a vote taken on Mr. Edwards's appointment as Chair of the Employment Committee. It was suggested that it could be taken care of at the July meeting. It seems as if Mr. Edwards volunteered to take the Chairmanship. Mr. Martinez and Ms. Hyams will meet twice a month to go over the agendas and issues that are important to the functioning of CODI. Mr. Miller thanked the Board for their participation at his last two access meetings. Ms. Hix said it was helpful to her to be able to phone in to the last access meeting. Mr. Martinez asked for an update on technology to call into meetings. Ms. Hyams said she is looking into this and will keep Mr. Miller advised. Mr. Miller will try to continue scheduling Access meetings in the middle of the month.

Housing Committee: Mr. Fulton reported that Mr. Dubin had brought up the issue of a person who was eliminated from the Section 8 Housing list because she didn't respond back in time to the department. Mr. Dubin said that was not his issue; his issue involves a letter being sent to a person who is Deaf who wasn't able to effectively understand the letter since her primary language is American Sign Language. She was evicted by her landlord and a letter was sent by the County for her to respond in a timely manner; when she didn't, she was taken out of the program. He said that he wanted to bring this to the Housing meeting but that the Housing committee never met. Mr. Martinez asked Mr. Fulton to have a meeting so this can be discussed. Mr. Fulton said that the issue should be addressed in Access. Mr. Dubin feels that it is disingenuous for CODI to have set up the requirement to go through a committee and then not have the committee meet.

Transit Committee: Mr. Martinez asked if the Transit committee meet. Ms. Hyams reported that the committee didn't meet but Ms. Valkema had called her about an issue and Ms. Hyams referred her to the County Manager's office to get the information. Mr. Dubin said that he had contacted Ms. Valkema to request a meeting to talk about the RFP selection committee. He again stated his displeasure at not being able to have an issue addressed at a committee meeting because that committee doesn't meet. Mr. Martinez asked the Chairs of the Committees to be more vigilant about items that come before the County Commission. He asked members to call their Commissioners or the ADA Office. Mr. Garcia spoke about the selection committee for the new para-transit RFP. Mr. Garcia feels that riders have been "lied" to and he would ask why a rider is not on the committee. Ms. Hyams said that was the issue Ms. Valkema brought up. Mr. Garcia said that 3 times in front of the Commission riders were promised a seat on the selection committee. Ms. Hyams again said that the appropriate place to start is at the County Manager's office. There was discussion. **A motion was made by Alan Rigerman and seconded by John Miller: To have CODI members contact their individual Commissioners concerning why a rider was not appointed to the selection committee and for a letter**

to be written that would remind the County that at the February 18, 2010 meeting of the County Commission it was promised that at least one stake-holds (riders) would be appointed to the selection committee and ask why none were appointed. The motion passed unanimous.

Old Business: Mr. Miller asked the Chair if Mr. Edward's appointment could be made official. Mr. Martinez suggested that a Vice Chair could also be named. Ms. Hix said she would accept Vice Chair but no action was done on either appointment. Mr. Miller spoke about some of the issues that were troubling to him. He said that under the sunshine laws, CODI members are at a disadvantage; when people send emails out with erroneous information they, CODI board members, can't correct. There was more discussion and it was said that a CODI member can always contact the ADA Office and then erroneous information can be corrected by the office of ADA. Ms. Hyams did say that as a public body sometimes CODI members might be exposed to actions that they feel are unfair and again, she suggested that the office should be contacted.

New Business: Ms. Hyams announced the location and time of the Transit selection meeting which will be held on Thursday, July 23rd. She said that the County continues to experience budget shortfalls which will increase layoffs; this will impact CODI because there are fewer rooms on the 18th floor available for CODI meeting since those rooms will be taken over by Human Resources due to layoffs. She went on to say that at present there are only three permanent staff in the ADA Office and she also reported that Ms. Johnson-Wright will be out of the office for up to 12 weeks due to medical reasons; this will leave two staff members to do the work of the entire office. Ms. Hyams said that she will be going on vacation from August 5 to August 15; she will not be checking her email or phone. She also said that it might be difficult to have multiple meetings while Ms. Johnson-Wright is out but Ms. Hyams will try her best. There was discussion about committee meetings and Mr. Miller said that committees could tape the meetings but Ms. Hyams said that if she isn't able to be at a planned meeting, she would expect the Chairperson to give her enough time to put the meeting on the calendar, set the agenda, and type up the minutes. She then said that committees can do work outside of a meeting and as an example she spoke about a housing issue. Ron Fulton has asked if the County should concern establishing preference for people with disabilities in their Section 8 and public housing program. On the surface, she said, it looks like a great idea but there are pros and cons for implementation. She suggested that the members of the committee call HUD and municipalities that have a public housing or Section 8 program to gain information for CODI so CODI will be able to give wise counsel to the County. Ms. Hyams went over the CODI calendar and said that for the rest of the year CODI monthly meetings will be on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Last month, the date was changed to secure a room and this month it was changed at Mr. Martinez's request.

Mr. Martinez reported that he and Ms. Hyams have agreed to meet twice a month to set agendas and other matters that need addressing. Committee chairs will also be consulted as appropriate. The public is asked to go through Mr. Martinez for their issues. Since there was no longer a quorum, the Election issue, process for agenda items and 30 minute open discussion item were not discussed.

Open Discussion: Mr. Martinez said that members must step-up and participate in committees. If not maybe some other people should be given the opportunity. Mr. Rigerman suggested an executive board meeting closed to the public but Ms. Hyams said all of CODI's meetings need to be open to the public. Ms. Hyams announced the ADA celebration at the north campus of FIU on Monday, July 26, 2010. Mr. Miller said that CODI's website was looking good and suggested that minutes try to be up to date and if minutes were not approved at the next meeting so they could go up on the website a link be used to explain why there is a delay in positing the minutes. Ms. Hyams said it could be done but only Dan Howe , from the ADA office, has authorization to correct, add or delete web content.

Mr. Martinez announced that after the meeting there would be an ADA celebration, 20th year since the signing of the ADA. The refreshments have been generously provided by Commissioner Moss.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:04 pm.